



Montana

Office of Public Instruction

Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

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The Montana Office of Public Instruction is taking comments from districts, schools, and the public on a request of waiver of the section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act to extend the period of availability of FY 2009 school improvement funds (SIG) under ESEA Title I Part A, Section 1003(g) for the SEA and all of its currently served Cohort 1 LEAs to September 30, 2014.

The OPI estimates \$2,351,824 million in remaining funds (of \$11,568,967 total) as of June 30, 2013 and submits the following proposal for continued use of FY09 ARRA and Regular SIG funds from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014 in SIG schools currently served. The funds that will remain on June 30, 2013 were initially allocated for three years of funding for a Cohort 1 Tier I school that did not continue after the first year.

Rationale:

An additional year of resources, service, technical assistance, collaboration and capacity building for the remaining Cohort 1 schools (all Tier I) would be instrumental in further embedding promising programs, practices, and policies to ensure sustainability beyond the funding period. The work of school turnaround is a delicate balance, requiring constant attention to local needs, buy-in from key stakeholders and transparent collaboration between the SEA and LEA's in our direct services model. The OPI and local schools have demonstrated a strong commitment to these efforts and have worked through challenges or obstacles every step of the way with optimism and courage. Early achievement results demonstrate that children are performing at higher levels, community engagement is up, the teacher and principal evaluation process grows stronger each year, and school staff professional development needs are met through an ongoing, reflective process. Continued efforts in key areas would be highly beneficial to these students and their communities.

The window for taking comments opens today, March 28, 2013, and runs through the end of the day on April 2, 2013 at 5:00 pm. Comments can be sent to the following email address: opiwaivers@mt.gov.

If you have questions about the proposed waiver, please contact either Mandy Smoker-Broadus at 406-444-3013 mbroadus@mt.gov or BJ Granbery at 406-444-4420 bgranbery@mt.gov. This waiver request is also posted on the OPI web site under Title I Part A at this link: <http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/TitlePrgms/TIitleIA/TitleIA.html>